

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 01242 231642Z

ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 799

S E C R E T PANAMA 1242

NODIS

CANAL NEGS

FOR THE SECRETARY

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO DEFENSE -- EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY,
DEPUTY SECRETARY, CHAIRMAN OF JCS, SECRETARY OF ARMY, ASSISTANT
SECRETARY (ISA)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS -- FEBRUARY 1977 ROUND

I.

THIS IS MESSAGE NUMBER TWO FROM THE US DEL
CONCERNING THE FEBRUARY 1977 ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS
WITH PANAMA.

II. STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS.

1. AFTER EIGHT DAYS OF TALKS -- MANY OF THEM PRIVATE
SESSIONS BETWEEN THE CHIEF NEGOTIATORS ONLY -- U.S.
AND PANAMANIAN DELEGATIONS AGREED FEBRUARY 22 TO
RECESS DISCUSSIONS TO PERMIT GOVERNMENTS TO REVIEW
POSITIONS ON OUTSTANDING ISSUES. BOTH SIDES CON-

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CENTRATED EFFORTS DURING THIS ROUND ON THE DURATION/
NEUTRALITY/POST-TREATY ARRANGEMENT PACKAGE BUT ALSO
DISCUSSED OTHER ISSUES.

2. AT CLOSING MEETING DURING EARLY EVENING
FEBRUARY 22, ESCOBAR AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE PANAMANIAN
SIDE, PRESENTED A PANAMANIAN POSITION PAPER AND READ

A MESSAGE TO THE PRESIDENT FROM GENERAL TORRIJOS WHICH HE ASKED THAT NEGOTIATORS TAKE TO WASHINGTON.

3. SUBSTANCE OF MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT IS THAT IN TORRIJOS' OPINION UNITED STATES IS NOT PREPARED TO SIGN AN AGREEMENT WHICH WOULD SOLVE PANAMA'S PROBLEM, AND THAT TYPE OF AGREEMENT WE COULD SIGN WOULD DELUDE BOTH PARTIES.

4. THE PANAMANIAN POSITION PAPER DEALT PRIMARILY WITH DURATION/NEUTRALITY/DEFENSE PACKAGE. IT PROPOSED A TREATY DURATION OF DECEMBER 31, 1999; TRANSFER OF CANAL ADMINISTRATION TO PANAMA IN 1990; CONCLUSION OF A FIXED-TERM MUTUAL SECURITY AGREEMENT NOT LATER THAN 1995; AND A HARDENED POSITION ON LANDS AND WATERS WITH HIGH-LIGHTS INCLUDING EARLY REVERSION TO PANAMA OF THE PANAMA RAILROAD, THE PORTS OF BALBOA AND CRISTOBAL, ALL COMMERCIAL ACTIVITIES TO INCLUDE PRESENT CANAL COMPANY HOUSING AREAS AND UTILITIES.

5. THE U.S. NEGOTIATORS EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE PANAMANIAN POSITION PAPER BUT AGREED TO PRESENT IT TO THE PRESIDENT TOGETHER WITH THE MESSAGE FROM TORRIJOS.

6. NEGOTIATORS WISH TO RESERVE ANALYSIS OF TORRIJOS MOTIVATIONS AND OBJECTIVES UNTIL AFTER RETURN TO WASHINGTON.

7. IN VIEW OF ABOVE, NEGOTIATORS DECIDED AGAINST
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DELIVERING TO TORRIJOS APPROVED LETTER FROM PRESIDENT.

III. PRESS STATEMENT

1. AT SUGGESTION OF PANAMANIAN REPRESENTATIVES, EACH SIDE WILL MAKE A BRIEF PRESS STATEMENT PRIOR TO DEPARTURE OF U.S. DELEGATION. TEXT OF U.S. STATEMENT FOLLOWS:
BEGIN QUOTE. DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS JUST CONCLUDED WE WERE ABLE TO MAKE SOME PROGRESS, BUT MAJOR PROBLEMS STILL REMAIN UNRESOLVED. WE ANTICIPATE THAT IN DUE COURSE WE WILL BE UNDERTAKING THE NEXT STEP IN THE NEGOTIATIONS AFTER FULL CONSULTATIONS. END QUOTE.

2. DELEGATION IS DEVELOPING CONTINGENCY PRESS GUIDANCE IN EVENT THAT PANAMANIAN SIDE GOES PUBLIC.

IV. WASHINGTON ACTIVITIES

1. NEGOTIATORS WISH TO BRIEF SECRETARIES OF STATE AND

DEFENSE, JCS, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER AND SECRETARY OF ARMY AT EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME CONCERNING RESULTS OF ROUND AND FOLLOW-ON ACTIONS, INCLUDING POSSIBLE THIRD COUNTRY CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS INITIATIVES. REQUEST THAT APPROPRIATE APPOINTMENTS BE ARRANGED, PREFERABLY AT STATE ON THURSDAY, DEFENSE ON FRIDAY AND OTHERS AS CONVENIENT.

2. PLEASE POSTPONE PARTICIPATION OF NEGOTIATORS IN FOREIGN POLICY BRIEFINGS OF FRESHMEN CONGRESSMEN SCHEDULED FEBRUARY 25. NEGOTIATORS WILL PROBABLY WISH TO BRIEF CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS AT EARLY DATE, BUT BELIEVE SUCH BRIEFINGS SHOULD BE POSTPONED UNTIL AFTER EXECUTIVE BRANCH CONSULTATIONS.

3. U.S. DELEGATION RETURNING TO WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 23 ON EASTERN 176 ARRIVING NATIONAL AIRPORT AT 1930 AS
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ARRANGED PRIOR TO DEPARTURE. S/AB REQUESTED TO NOTIFY FAMILIES OF DELEGATION MEMBERS. MINISTER BELL WILL BE ARRIVING WASHINGTON SEPARATELY AT 1559 ON EASTERN 192.
JORDEN

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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